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ABSTRACT

A syllabus and teaching methods for a community college local history course which focuses on primary sources about southern New Jersey are provided. Emphasis of the course is on how national issues affect local actions. Primary sources dating back to the 17th century are found in documentary collections of local and state archives. The course, entitled "South Jersey History," covers the period from the time of the Lenni-Lenape Indians to the 20th century. Unit topics are the settlement of South Jersey; agriculture and industry; religion and life; South Jersey in the Revolution; the economy, transportation, and Civil War; 19th century industry; the new immigration; and health, welfare, and recreation in the 20th century. Students are required to complete five assignments, all of which require research of primary documents or artifacts. Teaching methods include lectures, slide presentations, and in-class use of primary materials: diaries, journals, muster rolls of militia companies, newspaper articles, maps, committee minutes, and political resolutions. The course work can extend into the community through lectures, workshops, and publication of materials produced in class. (KC)

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LOCAL HISTORY:
FOLKLORE OR DOCUMENTED FACT?

by

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LOCAL HISTORY: FOLKLORE OR DOCUMENTED FACT?

Folklore, along with such folk customs as appear in the Foxfire books, has become accepted in some quarters as a reputable academic discipline. The emphasis is on the use of oral history in addition to published collections of stories and legends gathered in the past by various interested persons, usually newspaper columnists. South Jersey seems to have more than its share of this kind of material, much of it published by Rutgers University Press.

Without intent to denigrate the value of folklore in understanding local cultures, local history, as I understand it, is something different. It is authentic history. Its data should be researched, verified, and interpreted by the same rigorous standards and methods that govern the teaching and writing of national and world history. Most of its content should be taken from primary written sources.

My intent today is to share with you my experience in the use of documentary collections in local and state archives in researching and teaching local and American history.

In South Jersey we have extensive untapped resources of correspondence, account books of individuals and industries, ships logs, civil and ecclesiastical records and reports, legal documents, speeches, sermons, memoirs, and other types of primary materials going back to the 17th century and, of course, for more

recent years newspapers and periodicals. I use this material in several ways as a basis for classroom lectures and discussion questions and for student research papers. It is fundamental to my course in South Jersey History at Atlantic Community College, but of value also in American History for examples of how national issues affect local actions. My emphasis in this presentation will be on the former.

The gathering of information for classroom work requires little explanation -- in my case, it called for producing a short basic textbook with a good bibliography. As for student research outside the classroom, at first I followed the traditional plan of requiring a term paper, but one based mostly, if not entirely, on original research in documents, both published and in manuscript. Students were directed to libraries where this material could be found. Some of the better projects have been placed in local historical societies and the College library; some I have incorporated into my lecture notes (Judith Campbell's "New Jersey's Slave Laws: How Effective Were They?" is an example); and some I used in writing the textbook.

For the past two years, I have substituted for the term paper five shorter unit projects, described in the syllabus and in the materials on display here. All except those involving drawing or photography are based on actual documents. Initially, these source materials were placed on reserve in the College library. It soon became apparent, however, that they were not

easily accessible to extension-center students, many of whom were unable to get to the main campus. Therefore, my practice now is to photocopy excerpts and distribute them to students who want them. Students are encouraged, in this way, to begin building their own collections of primary sources for South Jersey History. In today's presentation, I will introduce these documents and explain how and why I use each one.

A community service in addition to classroom instruction that teachers of local history can provide is to research and publish articles and books on local history for a broader audience. Readers beyond the reach of the classroom are made acquainted with their local history; in return, the community college and faculty further enhance their reputation for scholarship. Often this leads to opportunities for lecturing and conducting workshops in the community-at-large. My work of this nature has been encouraged and its products favorably received by local and state historical agencies within and outside of New Jersey. As time permits, I would like to discuss how I go about researching, writing, and publishing books and papers on various aspects of South Jersey History for local, state, and national readers.

ATLANTIC COMMUNITY COLLEGE

HIST 119 History of South Jersey
Course Syllabus

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Course Description

South Jersey History is a course on the history of southern New Jersey from the time of the Lenni-Lenape Indians to the 20th century, with emphasis on the social-cultural and economic-industrial development of the counties of Atlantic, Camden, Cape May, Cumberland, Gloucester, and Salem.

Course Goals and Instructional Methods

The purpose is to acquaint the students with some facts regarding the region's past and, more importantly, to equip them with the tools and inspiration for pursuing the subject further at their leisure. It is to make them aware, as well as both proud and critical, of their heritage for whatever personal enjoyment they may derive from it, and that they might, by an analysis of past events, be enabled to place South Jersey's present, with its problems and prospects, in an historical perspective. The course attempts to stimulate an interest in local history by showing its relationship to the issues and events of national and world history. Such interest, it is hoped, will produce the continuing research needed to increase the fund of knowledge about our own past.

In accordance with these aims, the students are introduced to the raw materials of local history -- documents and contemporary accounts, pictures, artifacts, etc. -- by reading and viewing them, and by being asked to interpret them in written or visual presentations described below. The factual background is provided in a narrative text; primary materials for in-class use will be distributed as needed. Class lectures, slides, and the showing of historical objects supplement the text. Questions for discussion are raised by the instructor with the intent to aid the students in the analysis of historical materials. Course requirements and evaluation procedures are described below.

STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO READ THIS SYLLABUS AND KNOW ITS CONTENTS.

Texts

Koedel, R. Craig, South Jersey Heritage: A Social, Economic, and Cultural History. Washington: University Press of America, 1979.

New Jersey's Barrier Islands: An Ever-Changing Public Resource. New Brunswick: The Center for Coastal and Environmental Studies, Rutgers University, 1982. (Purchase from the Rutgers Center or the Atlantic County Historical Society.)

Course Outline and Objectives

(A period of approximately six 50-minutes classes is given to each unit.)

UNIT I The Settlement of South Jersey
READING ASSIGNMENT: Koedel, Chapters I and II

Objectives:

1. To place the early settlement of South Jersey within the context of 16th and 17th-century European exploration and settlement in the New World.

2. To examine Lenni-Lenape culture, the changes brought about by European influence, and the disappearance of the Indians from South Jersey.

3. To analyze the motivation for exploration and settlement in South Jersey as it developed from the search for a Northwest Passage to the Pacific Ocean to the permanent Quaker colonization. Students should be prepared to discuss (a) how the Dutch, the Swedes, and the English differed in their reasons for settling in the Delaware Valley, (b) to what extent and why each was successful in establishing permanent colonies, and (c) in what ways the settlements were alike and in what ways they differed.

UNIT II Agriculture and Industry in Colonial South Jersey
READING ASSIGNMENT: Koedel, Chapter III

Objectives:

1. To show the relationship between natural resources and economic development.

2. To describe South Jersey agriculture and industry in the colonial period.

3. To examine whether South Jersey agricultural and industrial developments were behind or in advance of the same developments elsewhere in the colonies and in Europe.

4. To understand the mercantilist system practiced by Great Britain at the time and to examine its effect on South Jersey industry; to consider whether smuggling was justified.

UNIT III Religion and Life in Colonial South Jersey
READING ASSIGNMENT: Koedel, Chapters IV and V

Objectives:

1. To evaluate the extent and effectiveness of religion in social and moral control.

2. To examine the influence of religion in the development of colonial education, humanitarian concerns, and the arts; to see the relationship between this influence and the tenets of each religious group.

Unit III (Con't.)

3. To introduce the student to several significant personalities of the area, especially religious and literary figures.

4. To provide a description of the homes and lifestyles of colonial South Jersey families.

UNIT IV South Jersey in the Revolution
READING ASSIGNMENT: Koedel, Chapter VI

Objectives:

1. To analyze, by examining primary sources, the Revolutionary activity in South Jersey as to its motivation, its extent, and its geographical concentration, and the elements of society among which it was most prominent; to examine, as well, the reasons of those who opposed it; to consider the question: "Were the reasons given by proponents and opponents of the Revolution valid?".

2. To evaluate the strategic importance of South Jersey to the Revolution in terms of its geographical location and contributions of materiel.

3. To describe the military engagements in South Jersey and the men who fought them.

UNIT V The Economy, Transportation, and Civil War, 1783-1865
READING ASSIGNMENT: Koedel, Chapters VII and VIII

Objectives:

1. To trace the flourishing and decline of the bog iron industry in South Jersey.

2. To examine the effect of the depletion of natural resources on the bog iron industry, agriculture, and population trends in South Jersey during the first half of the 19th century.

3. To trace the development of improved methods of transportation in South Jersey between 1830 and 1860, to relate this to similar developments elsewhere, and to see its effect upon the South Jersey economy. Emphasis is on the building of the Camden and Atlantic Railroad.

4. To examine the incidence of black slavery in South Jersey, to evaluate the influence of the Quaker opposition to the institution, and to trace its gradual abolition.

5. To see the relationship between Number 4 above and the growth of the free black population in South Jersey.

6. To analyze South Jersey's attitudes toward the causes and consequences of the Civil War.

UNIT VI Nineteenth Century Industry
READING ASSIGNMENT: Koedel, Chapters IX and X
New Jersey's Barrier Islands, Chapter III

Objectives:

1. To continue (from the colonial period) the examination of the relationship between South Jersey's natural resources and industrial development.

2. To trace the development and attendant problems of the shore tourist industry, with emphasis on Cape May and Atlantic City.

3. To analyze the social and moral problems of 19th-century Atlantic City.

4. To trace the development of shipbuilding in South Jersey, relating it especially to Number 1 above; to see how it has continued in modified form to the present; to see the relationship between shipbuilding and other industries.

5. To trace the development of glassmaking, using it as a springboard for a discussion of labor-management relations in late 19th-century South Jersey.

6. To examine the distinctive characteristics of the "South Jersey Glass" style.

7. To survey briefly other South Jersey industries (eg. commercial fishing and papermaking) and agriculture during the latter half of the 19th century.

UNIT VII The New Immigration, With Its Effect on Religion and Education
READING ASSIGNMENT: Koedel, Chapters XI and XII

Objectives:

1. To place late 19th-century immigration to South Jersey within the context of immigration to the United States as a whole during the period.

2. To establish the places of origin and destination of 19th-century immigrants, with special attention being given to South Jersey's planned communities, their characteristics, and their economic bases.

3. To examine the causes and effects of Southern black migration to South Jersey's urban areas from the post-Civil War era to mid-20th century.

4. To analyze the changing religious patterns in South Jersey during the 19th century, concentrating on the reasons for the rise of

Unit VII (Con't.)

Methodism early in the century and the later Protestant-Roman Catholic conflict.

5. To analyze the problems and opposition surrounding the emergence of free, public education in South Jersey and its eventual triumph.

UNIT VIII Health, Welfare, and Recreation; Twentieth Century Synopsis
READING ASSIGNMENT: Koedel, Chapters XIII, XIV, and XV

Objectives:

1. To trace advances in penology, the care of the mentally ill and retarded, medicine, and public health.

2. To see the reading, recreational, and artistic preferences of South Jerseyans during the 19th century.

3. To examine the social, industrial, and agricultural changes of the 20th century brought on by the two World Wars and the Great Depression, with a lesser emphasis on the consequences of improved methods of transportation and communication.

4. To make the student aware of the enormous amount of research remaining to be done in South Jersey History.

Each student is required to do one of the assignments from each of the five groups. All of these projects REQUIRE RESEARCH IN PRIMARY DOCUMENTS or with ARTIFACTS. Your instructor will give you help in locating sources.

Read all instructions thoroughly and carefully; be sure you understand what you are being asked to do.

FIRST GROUP

1. Draw a map of South Jersey showing the forts and settlements, the distribution of national and religious groups, countries of origin, and the livelihoods of the settlers up to 1750. The map may be in any format the student chooses; it will be graded on appearance, clarity, accuracy, and thoroughness.

2. You are the Chancellor of Sweden in the 1640's. On behalf of the Queen and the New Sweden Company, send a communique to Governor Printz in reply to his reports of 1644 and 1647. You must decide where he needs encouragement, commendation for his successes, and reprimand for his failures. Also, respond to his requests. (300-400 words)

3. You are a Quaker living in England in 1678. You have received two letters from John Crips, who has moved to West Jersey, inviting you to join him there. You also have before you William Penn's letter. Write a reply to Crips (300-400 words), telling him what it was in his and Penn's letters that made you decide to migrate to West Jersey (or, why you have decided to remain in England).

SECOND GROUP

1. Draw sketches (or take photographs) showing one exterior and one interior architectural feature of an actual South Jersey structure erected prior to 1776. It may be a home or a public building. Identify the building and the features, explain why the features were included as a part of the structure, and suggest how they reflect the life-style (the social and economic position, for example) of the people who used it.

2. You are a friend traveling in South Jersey with Peter Kalm, Philip Vickers Fithian, or John Brainerd. Write an entry in your diary describing what you saw, did, and thought on a specific day or week. You will, of course, want to consult your friend's journal to read his entry for those dates. (300-400 words)

3. You are a churchgoer attending services at a South Jersey church on a Sunday morning in the 18th century. Name the church and the minister, and describe in 300-400 words what you saw, what you did, and what the preacher said in his sermon. This must be from a specific, documented sermon given locally by a preacher in the 18th century, and it must describe an authentic 18th-century service.

THIRD GROUP

1. You are Colonel Christopher Greene reporting back to General George Washington in response to his orders and instructions of October 9, 1777. Send a plan of Fort Mercer, point out the changes you and du Plessis made, and explain how you will deploy your troops if and when attacked. In planning your strategy, don't forget the fleet in the river. (300-400 words in addition to plan of the fort)

2. You are a soldier in Bloomfield's Company of the Third New Jersey Battalion about to depart on the Northern campaign. Write a letter to your parents telling them of your thoughts and feelings, having heard Enoch Green's address to the Battalion. (300-400 words)

3. You are a neutral, or a Tory, in Cumberland County in 1776. Write a "Letter to the Editor" of the Plain Dealer, criticizing his views. Make reference to specific opinions he has expressed. (300-400 words)

FOURTH GROUP

1. Draw sketches (or take photographs) showing one exterior and one interior architectural feature of an actual South Jersey structure erected between 1780 and 1850. It may be a home or a public building. Identify the building and the features, explain why the features were included as a part of the structure, and suggest how they reflect the life-style (the social and economic position, for example) of the people who used it.

2. You have just found Richard Osborne's lost diary.* Give the dates (in some cases they will be approximate) and content of the most important entries you would expect to read in it between 1852 and 1854. What would you expect him to say about some of the problems and personalities he encountered? (300-400 words)

   *As far as I know, no such diary exists, but he and his associates did leave numerous reports and accounts.

3. Using "The Weymouth Diary" as your source, write a 300-400 word essay called "Life--Its Problems and Pasttimes--in an Iron Village."

FIFTH GROUP

1. Draw sketches (or take photographs) showing one exterior and one interior architectural feature of an actual South Jersey structure erected in the Victorian style and era. It may be a home or a public building. Identify the building and the features, explain why the features were included as a part of the structure, and suggest how they reflect the life-style (the social and economic position, for example) of the people who used it.

2. You are a tour guide in the 1890's or the 1920's. Plan a week's vacation in Atlantic City -- itinerary, accommodations, entertainmen, everything -- for a group made up mostly of young families. Pick a specific year. These places and events must actually have been there and/or going on in Atlantic City during the year you choose. Your presentation will be judged on neatness, accuracy, and thoroughness.

3. Imagine yourself as an associate of Charles K. Landis in creating the city of Vineland. Write a memo to Landis, pointing out those plans and actions which you think are practical and beneficial to the community and those which you think are ill-advised. (300-400 words)

These instructional methods correspond to the unit objectives listed in the syllabus. Note the use of primary materials here as well as in the research assignments.

UNIT I

1. Lecture, by showing exploration routes and settlements on U. S., New Jersey, and South Jersey maps, and by in-class reading and discussion of explorers' journals.

2. Lectures, in-class readings from colonial writers in which they describe the Indian culture, exhibiting Indian artifacts to whatever extent they are available. Show whelk, from which wampum was made. The chalkboard is used to illustrate the Lenape construction methods. Photographs of their tools, etc. are shown. These are used as examples of non-written primary sources employed by the historian.

3. Discussion of the question, with lecture and readings from journals to whatever extent they are helpful. Use of line graph to show population growth by county to 1784.

UNIT II

1. In showing the relationship between natural resources and economic development, the class together compiles a list of South Jersey's natural resources. By lecture and discussion, from this list a profile of the area's colonial industry emerges.

2. Descriptions of South Jersey's agriculture and industry by colonial writers are read and discussed. Students' attention is directed to such primary sources as Richard Somers' papers, the Whaler's Diary, and other journals. Manuscripts of these have been copied on overhead transparencies for use in class. Maps are used to show the location of place names and to trace the road and water system over which colonial commerce passed.

UNIT III -- See "Religion in Colonial South Jersey," which follows, pp. 11-12.

UNIT IV

1. The statement of the objective (1) includes a description of the instructional method. The primary sources used in class include diaries and journals, letters and correspondence, church records, muster rolls of militia companies, newspaper accounts and articles, minutes of committees of observation, and resolutions of patriotic associations and the Continental Congress. The question to be considered is put to the class for discussion.

2. Lecture material, maps, with further reference in class to some of the primary sources given in (1) above, and the unpublished private accounts of such persons as Col. Richard Somers are used in this evaluation. The students are asked to give some assessment of South Jersey's importance to the overall strategy of the Revolution, although the evidence presented leaves little room for argument but that it was critical, at least until the end of 1778. Students are asked to state and support their opinions as to South Jersey's most vital role in the Revolution.

3. Description of the military engagements involving South Jersey are presented mostly by the use of maps, plans of the fortifications and river defenses (using overhead transparencies), and descriptions and accounts by contemporaries. The American and British (including Hessian) armies and navies, ships, equipment, uniforms, etc. are illustrated with four pictographic charts published in connection with the Bicentennial. The sites of the major military engagements are visited on field trips.

UNIT V (Objectives 2-4 are considered here.)

2. Emigration to the West: Doughty-Frost letters and maps, used in class or as an assignment. (This refers to the unpublished correspondence of two families who moved from South Jersey to Ohio and Illinois in the 1830's.)

3. Building of the Camden and Atlantic: speeches and correspondence related to Richard Osborne are used in class or as a research project.

4. Legislative acts are read or summarized. In 1865, how many slaves were there in South Jersey? Reference is made to a statistics sheet, "New Jersey, Black Population, Slave and Free, By County, 1790 and 1800," which is projected by overhead transparency. Why so fewer slaves in the southern counties? Evidently because of Quaker influence, although in no county by that time were the Quakers in the majority. (Reference is made to Quaker attitudes toward slavery documented in God's Vine.)

Instructional methods for UNITS VI - VIII were not included in this presentation, but they follow substantially the same pattern.

RELIGION IN COLONIAL SOUTH JERSEY

Unit III Topic: Religion and Life in Colonial South Jersey
(For Unit objectives, see Syllabus, page 2)

Lesson Objective 1: to show the geographic distribution and size of the religious denominations in South Jersey at mid-18th century; to compare the size of the total church membership with that of the population as a whole.

Use of map and population line graph; pertinent statistics are shown with overhead projector or photocopies are distributed.

Lesson Objective 2: to examine the ways by which churches attempted to exert moral and social control over their membership.

a. Ask the students if they can suggest ways in which this might have been done.

b. Read brief selections from sermons of the 18th century, in which South Jersey clergymen dealt with social and moral issues.

c. Deductive question for discussion: What were the underlying moral assumptions that these sermons imply — in other words, what did the churches consider to be acceptable and unacceptable behavior?

d. Read examples of and summarize disciplinary actions taken by the churches against infractors of their standards among the membership.

Lesson Objective 3: to examine the effectiveness of the churches in accomplishing this.

Discussion question: What was the validity of these methods of moral suasion -- i.e.. were they effective? If not, why not?

Note: I try to handle this as an exercise in inductive reasoning. However, students generally do not have sufficient facts at their disposal to make a judgment. I provide them with the facts at the risk of ending up answering the question for them.

Lesson Objective 4: to raise the question of whether, in view of the disparity between the size of the church population and the total population, it is probable that religion had a social and moral influence over society as a whole; if so, by what means?

Based on their readings, the students should come up with the following "means": public example, education, political leadership, business ethics, humanitarian outreach. Lecture-discussion of the churches' influence on each of these procedes to the extent that time permits.

Presbyterians and Indians: SJH, 40-41
*God's Vine, pp. 124-28; 521-22; 525.
Enoch Green sermon on business ethics

Lesson Objective 5: to compare the types and effectiveness of the churches' moral suasion of the colonial period with that of today.

Students are asked to make this comparison with the intent to provide a review and summary, and to apply what has been learned to a new question; a closure.

* God's Vine refers to my book, God's Vine in This Wilderness: Religion in South Jersey to 1800, (Woodbury, New Jersey: Gloucester County Historical Society, 1980). 242 pp. LC79-54385. This work is based almost exclusively on primary sources. The pages listed in the lesson outline above refer to my typewritten manuscript.

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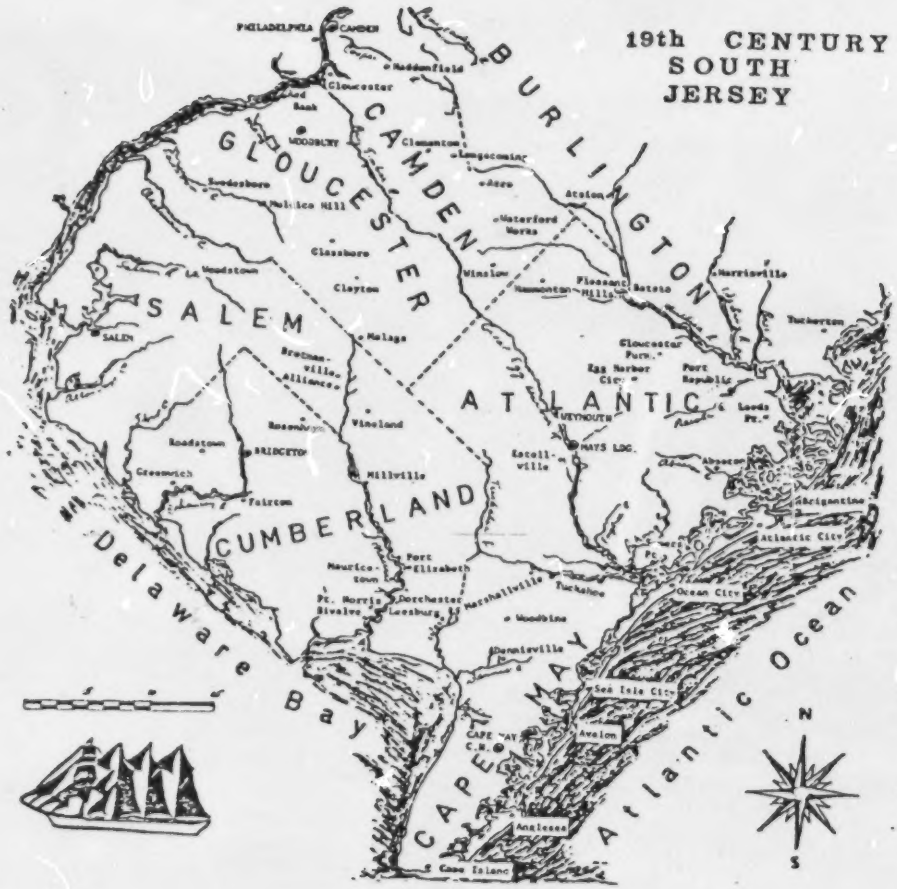

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